

**SPEECH BY PRIME MINISTER LEE HSIEN LOONG
AT MAYORS' SWEARING-IN CEREMONY,
20 JUNE 2014, 12PM, PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION AUDITORIUM**

Mr Lim Swee Say
Deputy Chairman of PA

Mayors

District Councillors

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

INTRODUCTION

1. Happy to join you for the Mayors' Swearing-in Ceremony
 - a. Congratulate Dr Teo Ho Pin, Mr Teo Ser Luck and Dr Maliki Osman on their reappointments
 - b. Welcome Ms Low Yen Ling as Mayor for South West District and Ms Denise Phua as Mayor for Central Singapore District
 - c. Thank Mr Sam and Dr Amy Khor for their outstanding work and leadership as Mayors for the Central Singapore and South West Districts
 - d. Dr Khor has also done an excellent job as Chairperson of the Mayors' Committee
 - i. Confident that Dr Teo Ho Pin will be a worthy successor
2. Also thank Councillors
 - a. All of you are volunteers, and some hold full-time jobs

b. You have served with commitment and passion, supported the CDCs and Mayors unstintingly, and helped to improve the lives of the residents

c. Thank you very much!

CDCs' MISSION

3. The purpose of CDCs is to build an inclusive society and strengthen community bonds

4. CDCs define their mission in three ways

a. Assisting the Needy

b. Bonding the People

c. Connecting the Community

d. i.e. the “ABCs” of CDCs

5. CDCs have fulfilled these roles well

a. Designed and implemented your own programmes to serve the needy, and responded quickly to local needs.

b. Introduced activities to bond residents of all races and ages, e.g. strengthening racial harmony, promoting active aging, enhancing emergency preparedness, etc.

c. Mobilised the wider community – private sector, schools, VWOs, volunteers – to serve residents and strengthen our social ties and resilience

6. Many good programmes, e.g.

a. South West CDC's Adopt-A-Rental Block and Adopt-A-Precinct Programmes

- i. Volunteers help needy families by donating money, buying food, painting the flat, etc.
 - ii. Benefitted more than 3,000 households
- b. North West SwimSafer Clubs for Seniors
 - i. Started by a passionate senior who voluntarily coached elderly swimmers for many years
 - ii. North West CDC saw the benefits of swimming to elders, and expanded the programme to more than 150 seniors
- c. South East Neighbours for Active Living Programme
 - i. In partnership with Eastern Health Alliance, grassroots organisation and social services organisations
 - ii. To reduce the re-admission rates of the vulnerable elderly at Changi General Hospital
 - iii. Professional Community Care Team from the Eastern Health Alliance visits the elderly regularly
 - iv. Students from neighbouring schools and neighbours check in on them from time to time to ensure their health and social well being
- d. Well done!

FUTURE OF CDCs

- 7. The CDCs' "ABC" mission remains relevant
 - a. Needy continue to require help, as extended family ties weaken, and more elders live alone or only with their spouses

b. Social bonds need more tending, as Singaporeans lead busier and more private lives, and have more diverse interests

c. Community involvement must deepen to complement individual effort and Government support in our new Phase

8. Government is focussed on improving people's lives

a. Significantly strengthened our social safety nets, e.g. MediShield-Life, Pioneer Generation Package

b. Enhancing social cohesion between our different ethnic groups, and integrating new arrivals into our society

c. Engaging the community in shaping our future together, e.g. Our Singapore Conversation, MediShield-Life, Ubin Project

9. One way we are implementing policies better on the ground: Social Service Offices (SSOs)

a. The CDCs' work assisting the needy has shown how useful it is to be close to the ground

b. The 20 SSOs will bring us even closer to Singaporeans

c. They will

i. Administer social assistance to needy families

ii. Help Singaporeans navigate through the "kueh lapis" of Government assistance programmes

iii. Partner the community to improve how we can plan and deliver social assistance

10. CDCs continue to play important roles
 - a. Help to build up the SSOs
 - i. The Social Assistance Units in all five CDCs have been converted to SSOs
 - ii. Use your knowledge and networks to help the SSOs start off on the right footing, and strike the right balance between administrative efficiency and personal touch
 - iii. The SSOs' success is your success
 - b. Run local programmes to complement the SSOs
 - i. Go beyond social assistance to promote social mobility, and encourage self-help in the community
 - ii. Work with other government agencies to identify emerging needs and issues
 - c. Marshall resources in the wider community – private sector, VWOs, volunteers – to serve Singaporeans
 - i. Government cannot and should not do everything
 - ii. Community too must support one another
 - iii. CDCs should hence do more to
 - (1) Involve the private sector, by championing Corporate Social Responsibility or encouraging companies to adopt local causes or partner VWOs
 - (2) Promote volunteerism and a spirit of giving back, especially among those who have done well

11. Cheered that CDCs are partnering SSOs closely, e.g.
 - a. CatchPlus programme by Central Singapore CDC, Kreta-Ayer GROs and Kreta Ayer SSO
 - i. Helps children from vulnerable families through mentoring, tuition and enrichment classes
 - ii. SSOs refer residents with children who need help to the CDC
 - iii. CDC partner the SSO, GROs and private sector to raise funds, and organise activities for the children
 - b. North East CDC's Mentoring Programme
 - i. Complements SSOs' financial assistance by promoting social mobility
 - ii. Assigns community mentors to lower-income students, to guide students and encourage them to aim high
 - iii. Presently in East View Primary School, but will extend this to more students and volunteers in NE District

Mayors' Roles

12. Mayors play key roles in leading the CDCs
 - a. Motivating their councillors, grassroots leaders and volunteers
 - b. Encouraging new ideas to help the community
 - c. Most importantly, serving the people with all their heart
13. Urge Mayors to use the next few years well

- a. Lead the CDCs to meet changing needs
- b. Always remember the basic ABCs: Assist the needy, Bond the people and Connect the community
- c. But continue to explore new ways to work with and serve a changing population

CONCLUSION

14. Over the last 17 years, CDCs have become valued participants in the community

- a. Confident you will continue to contribute to your Districts and to Singapore

- b. Help us build a cohesive and compassionate Singapore

15. Wish Mayors every success

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